

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-14

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 PM-05 NSC-05 SP-02 SS-15 CIAE-00
INR-10 NSAE-00 TRSE-00 MCE-00 ACDA-12 L-03 EB-08
OMB-01 /076 W

-----064122 311911Z /70

P 311900Z MAR 78

FM AMEMBASSY MEXICO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 9222

INFO SECDEF WASHDC

C O N F I D E N T I A L MEXICO 05234

EO 11652: GDS

TAGS: MASS, MX

SUBJECT: TECHNICAL DATA ON A-4 AIRCRAFT

REF: (A) STATE 072112 (B) STATE 074148 (C) MEXICO 04165

1. REF (A) INDICATES DOUGLAS AIRCRAFT IS FOLLOWING UP ON MEXICAN REQUEST, WHICH IT SEEMS TO US TO HAVE SATISFIED BY PROVIDING PRICE AND BUDGET DATA TO MEXICAN AIR FORCE IN JUNE 1977. AS WE UNDERSTAND CASE, IT IS NOW DOUGLAS, NOT GOM, WHICH IS PRESSING DEPARTMENT TO AUTHORIZE PROVISION OF TECHNICAL DATA.

2. REF (B) EVIDENCES CONTINUING LACK OF COORDINATION AMONG FOREIGN RELATIONS PERSONNEL OVER WHERE JET PURCHASE MATTER STANDS. EMBASSY BELIEVES USG WOULD ONLY INCREASE CONFUSION GEOMETRICALLY IF DEPARTMENT APPROVED DOUGLAS'S APPLICATION TO PROVIDE TECHNICAL DATA ON A-4'S TO MEXICO. GOM WOULD LIKELY ASK WHAT SIGNALS WE WERE SENDING, AND WHY. WOULD PROVISION OF INFORMATION (ESPECIALLY IF GOM NOT PRESENTLY PRESSING FOR IT) BE TAKEN AS SIGN THAT U.S. IS WILLING TO PROVIDE A-4'S, WHICH WE UNDERSTAND ARE LESS CONFIDENTIAL

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COSTLY THAN F-5'S, WHILE WE ARE UNWILLING TO SELL F-5'S? WOULD NORTHROP DRAW A SIMILAR CONCLUSION?

3. ALTHOUGH AMBASSADOR'S MARCH 9 CONVERSATION WITH PRESIDENT LOPEZ PORTILLO WAS IN CONTEXT OF REQUEST FOR F-5 PURCHASE, THE RESPONSE WAS IN TERMS OF NOT HAVING AN INTEREST IN FIGHTER AIRCRAFT IN GENERAL; AND AS STATED IN

REFTEL (C), HIS ANSWER WAS QUITE CATEGORIC. WHILE EMBASSY APPRECIATED DOUGLAS'S INTEREST IN PROMOTING A POSSIBLE SALE, AND CONCEDES THAT A-4'S MIGHT BE A BETTER AIRCRAFT AT A CHEAPER PRICE FOR MEXICAN AIR FORCE MODERNIZATION, WE CONTINUE TO BELIEVE THAT WE WOULD RE-RAISE ALL THE DUST THAT HAS NOT YET SETTLED IF WE APPROVED THE DOUGLAS REQUEST AT THIS TIME. IF ANSWER TO DOUGLAS CAN BE DELAYED, WE RECOMMEND IT; BUT IF DEPARTMENT IS BEING PRESSED FOR A YES OR NO ANSWER, WE SUGGEST NO, NOT AT THIS MOMENT. LUCEY

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Message Attributes

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Draft Date: 31 mar 1978
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TAGS: MASS, MX, US, DOUGLAS AIRCRAFT
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